

## C L A I M S

1. A work identification system comprising:
  - 5 a work storage configured to store digital data representing at least one of a shape, area, and color of an only one work;
  - 10 a collation section configured to calculate a degree of deviation between digital data representing at least one of a shape, area, and color of a target work to be identified and the digital data stored in the work storage; and
  - 15 a test section configured to perform a test of hypothesis based on a predetermined hypothesis using the degree of deviation.
- 20 2. The system according to claim 1, wherein said work storage stores the digital data representing at least one of a shape, area, and color of a signature attached to the only one work; and said collation section calculates the degree of deviation between digital data representing at least one of a shape, area, and color of a signature attached to the target work and the digital data stored in the work storage.
- 25 3. The system according to claim 1, wherein said test section performs the test using a variance of the degree of deviation.
4. The system according to claim 1, wherein said test section performs the test using a mean of the

degree of deviation.

5. The system according to claim 2, wherein said collation section calculates the degrees of deviation for sub regions dividing the signature in a matrix manner.

6. The system according to claim 1, wherein said collation section calculates the degree of deviation between digital data representing the color in accordance with color fading and change of color.

10 7. The system according to claim 1, wherein said test section determines whether the target work is identical to the only one work.

8. The system according to claim 1, wherein said work storage stores the digital data of plurality of only one works; and  
said test section searches said work storage to find one of the only one works which is most similar to the target work.

9. A signature management system comprising:  
20 a signature storage configured to store signature data representing signatures;  
a work storage configured to store work data representing works; and  
a signature inserting section configured to insert one of the signature data into one of the work data in response to a request received through a network from a requester and distribute the work data into which

the signature data is inserted to the requester through the network.

10. The system according to claim 9, further comprising:

5 a signature search section configured to collate a signature data of a target work to be identified and the signature data stored in the signature storage in response to an identification request received through the network and returns a result of collation to the requester through the network.

10 11. The system according to claim 9, further comprising:

15 a work search section configured to collate a work data of a target work to be identified and the work data stored in the work storage in response to an identification request received through the network and returns a result of collation to the requester through the network.

20 12. The system according to claim 9, wherein said request includes data indicating a signature insertion position, and said signature inserting section comprises a determination section configured to determine whether the signature insertion position indicated by the request is a predetermined position 25 which is approved by an author or owner of the work data and does not insert the signature data into the work data if it is determined that the signature

insertion position is not the predetermined position.

13. The system according to claim 9, wherein said request includes data indicating a work use purpose, and said signature inserting section comprises a 5 determination section configured to determine whether the work use purpose indicated by the request is a predetermined purpose which is approved by an author or owner of the work data and does not insert the signature data into the work data if it is determined 10 that the work use purpose is not the predetermined purpose.

14. The system according to claim 9, wherein said request includes data indicating a signature insertion position and data indicating a work use purpose, and 15 said signature inserting section comprises a first determination section configured to determine whether the signature insertion position indicated by the request is a predetermined position which is approved by an author or owner of the work data, a second determination section configured to determine whether the work use purpose indicated by the request is a predetermined purpose which is approved by an author or owner of the work data, and inserts the signature data 20 into the work data if it is determined that the 25 signature insertion position is the predetermined position and that the work use purpose is the predetermined purpose.

15. The system according to claim 9, further comprising a search section configured to search said signature storage to find out one of the signature data which is most similar to an object signature data which 5 is transmitted from the requester and returns a result of search to the requester.

16. The system according to claim 9, further comprising a search section configured to search said work storage to find out one of the work data which is most similar to a target work data which is transmitted 10 from the requester and returns a result of search to the requester.

17. A signature management system comprising:  
15 a signature storage configured to store signature data representing signatures; and  
a signature identifying section configured to collate an object signature data transmitted from a requester through a network and the signature data stored in said signature storage and return a result of 20 collation to the requester through the network.

18. The system according to claim 17, further comprising:

25 a work storage configured to store work data representing works; and  
a work identifying section configured to collate a target work data transmitted from the requester through the network and the work data stored in said work

storage and return a result of collation to the requester through the network.

19. The system according to claim 17, further comprising a search section configured to search said 5 signature storage to find out one of the signature data which is most similar to the object signature data and returns a result of search to the requester.

20. The system according to claim 18, further comprising a search section configured to search said 10 work storage to find out one of the work data which is most similar to the target work data and returns a result of search to the requester.